



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

November 27, 2007

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

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From: Patricia S. Ploehn, LCSW
Director

MARCH 13, 2007 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #15 – EDUCATION CONSULTANT REFERRALS AND BI-ANNUAL REPORT ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PERFORMANCE IN PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

On March 13, 2007, your Board instructed the Director of Children and Family Services to prepare a report bi-annually with substantive, measurable data on the performance of school districts in providing educational services for foster children and report back within 60 days on:

1. The method the Department of Children and Family Services will use to track data on the referrals received by the Education Consultants include assessing the school districts:
 - Complete special education assessments and Individualized Education Plans appropriately and in a timely manner;
 - Comply with due process requirements when suspending, expelling and ordering "opportunity transfers;"
 - Enroll children in a timely manner;
 - Provide school records in a timely manner;
 - Award partial credit when appropriate;
 - Provide tutoring and academic mentoring; and
2. The format the Director of Children and Family Services will use to prepare a report with substantive, measurable data and evaluation provided.

Ten contracts for Education Consultant Services were renewed for the 2007/2008 fiscal year providing 20 to 40 hours of coverage to twelve of the Department's nineteen regional offices. The offices being serviced are Lancaster, Palmdale, Glendora, Pasadena, El Monte, Metro North, West Los Angeles, Hawthorne, Wateridge, Belvedere, Santa Fe Springs, and Lakewood.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Efforts are currently underway to contract for an additional four Education Consultants with an anticipated start date of April 1, 2008.

The services of the Education Consultants have been well received by the Children's Social Workers (CSW), the caregivers, and the school districts since their official arrival into the regional offices on April 1, 2007. The focused and knowledgeable educational advocacy has been a welcomed asset in serving the educational needs of the youth in care. The Education Consultants are providing a voice for the youth to ensure their education rights are addressed and received. The Consultants know the education code and the language used by the schools as well as how to navigate the vast school systems. They are able to effectively and efficiently address the service requested by the CSW to get the child's education back on track.

The Referral for Education Consultant Services (Attachment A) is completed and submitted by CSW or caregiver to the Education Consultant to begin the process. The issues addressed on the referral range from suspension and expulsion, which always take first priority, to special education assessments, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Student Study or Success Team (SST), to academic and behavioral problems, and various AB 490 concerns. Work with the IEPs range from drafting a written request to the school for an initial assessment to determine if special education services are warranted to advocating for costly accommodations. The Education Consultant will then attend the IEP meeting to insure all of the child's educational needs are addressed and accommodations and directives are written into the IEP to obligate the school district to provide the necessary services. An informal follow-up by the Education Consultant is then conducted to insure the school remains in compliance with the IEP.

An important, unforeseen outcome has occurred on many occasions when a child in special education has been suspended or expelled from school. In the resulting hearings, the Education Consultants have successfully argued that the disciplinary action was inappropriate and illegal due to the school district's non-compliance with the child's current IEP. This advocacy has reversed the disciplinary action which allows the child back into the school and expunges the adverse mark in the school record. Further, it brings to the forefront that the school district is in non-compliance and strongly encourages the enforcement of the directives on the child's IEP. This would never have happened without the knowledge and service of the Education Consultants.

Data Outcomes

Data has been collected and tabulated for six months commencing April 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007 to determine the performance outcomes of the services provided by the Education Consultants. There are eighteen specific service areas with a nineteenth choice for "other." Multiple service areas can be selected for each referral; therefore, when tabulating 100% will be exceeded. The cases are not counted until each service area has been resolved. Once a resolution has been reached for all the selected service areas on the referral, the case is considered completed. A total of 778 cases have been completed. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the referrals involved enrollment, academic and IEP issues, with

the breakdown being: Enrollment with 221 cases or 28.4%, Academic (poor grades) 192 cases or 24.7%, and IEPs with 170 cases or 21.9%. As expected the next three highest requested areas of service were: Records with 106 cases or 13.6%, Behavior with 99 cases or 12.7% and then Special Education issues with 72 cases or 9.3% (Attachment B).

All of these matters require direct communication with the involved school site and perhaps the district office. Therefore, it is very important for the Department to keep the lines of communication open with each district we work with to develop and strengthen relationships to reach a shared understanding on the importance of improving the educational outcomes for the children served by both agencies.

The Education Consultants work closely with schools when advocating for the needs of our youth. Many individuals at school sites are unfamiliar with AB 490 and the rights it bestows on foster youth. This allows for a training opportunity to educate the school about the new law while resolving the enrollment or school stability issue. By taking this approach we improve the service to our youth. The same applies with the school district's knowledge and compliance with special education law and the due process requirements in discipline. The role of the Education Consultant is to advocate for the child's educational needs in a collaborative rather than adversarial manner.

The Education Consultants report that the majority of the interaction with the various schools and school district personnel has led to the development of a stronger working relationship which will improve future communication. The non-compliance issue with the IEP for a large number of our special education youth has precipitated a request by the Education Consultants to meet with the Special Education Division of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to open discussions about stricter and more consistent compliance with the IEP directives for youth being served by the Department. The Education Program Manager is making this arrangement.

The Department is very encouraged by the success of the Education Consultants and the collaborative bridges that have been built with the school districts serving our youth.

If you have questions, please call me or your staff may contact Armand Montiel, Board Relations Section Manager at (213) 351-5530.

PSP:AC:JH
PA:pa

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

Referral for Education Consultant Services

Office Name _____ Date _____

CSW Name _____ Phone _____

Student's Name _____ DOB _____

Mother's Name _____ Case/ State Number _____

Holder of Ed. Rights Name _____ Phone _____

Caregiver's Name _____ Phone _____

School of Attendance _____ Phone _____

If child is in out-of-home care, please provide the signed Parental Consent and Authorization for Medical Care and Release of Health and Education Records (DCFS 179).

Assistance required with (Please check):

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Enrollment | <input type="checkbox"/> School of Origin | <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of Records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> AB3632 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension | <input type="checkbox"/> Expulsion | <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity Transfer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance | <input type="checkbox"/> Truancy | <input type="checkbox"/> Remedial Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Center Referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Study or Success Team (SST) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Plan (IEP) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California High School Exit Exam | <input type="checkbox"/> Holder of Education Rights | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in Multi- Disciplinary Group Decision Making Process (TDM) | | |

Other Concerns, Questions and/or Comments _____

Please return completed form to, _____, Educational Consultant on the
Consultant's Name

floor, desk _____ . If you have any questions or concerns the consultant can be reached at:
(Number)

(Phone numbers)

(E-mail address)

Services Provided by Educational Consultant
(This section to be completed by Educational Consultant)

Date Opened _____

Date Closed _____

Consultant's Name _____

Phone _____

Tracking number _____

School Name _____

Phone _____

School District _____

School Representative's Name _____

Issue Addressed _____

Actions taken _____

Resolution _____

School's Involvement was at: ☐ School Site ☐ District Level

Knowledge & compliance with:

Special Education Law: ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Needs Improvement

Due Process Requirements in Discipline: ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Needs Improvement

AB 490: ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Needs Improvement

As a result of working with the school/district, a working relationship has developed to improve
future communication: ☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Total Amount of Time Invested _____

DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILY SERVICES

APR TO SEP 2007		TRACKING LOG for EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT SERVICES																			
(CLOSED)		TYPE OF SERVICE																			
All Consultants	No.	Avg Months	TYPE OF SERVICE																		
			ENROLL	SCHORG	RECS	ACAD	BEHVR	SUSP	EXPLS	OPPTTR	ATTNOC	TRNCY	RMCL	REGCTR	SST	SPCLD	EP	CAPSEE	HEDRG	TDM	OTHR
APRIL	110	0.2	36	18	18	28	12	3	3	8	3	6	3	1	5	5	22	3	5	2	18
MAY	145	0.5	37	4	24	30	19	3	2	1	14	5	7	2	5	8	38	1	2	10	32
JUNE	133	0.7	21	4	10	35	20	8	0	6	8	8	1	2	1	14	38	5	0	7	44
JULY	126	1.0	26	5	21	33	11	2	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	19	26	2	1	12	18
AUGUST	97	1.3	22	12	15	24	10	2	1	1	4	0	3	1	1	11	13	1	1	11	23
SEPTEMBER	167	1.3	79	17	20	42	27	5	3	1	14	5	7	1	10	15	35	4	3	18	47
Total	778	0.8	221	60	104	192	99	23	12	20	49	27	25	11	25	72	170	16	12	60	182
			28.4%	7.7%	13.6%	24.7%	12.7%	3.0%	1.5%	2.6%	6.3%	3.5%	3.2%	1.4%	3.2%	9.3%	21.9%	2.1%	1.5%	7.7%	23.4%
Type of Service (Definition)																					
School Enrollment	ENROLL																				
School of Origin	SCHORG																				
Transfer Records	RECS																				
Academic Problems	ACAD																				
Behavior Problems	BEHVR																				
Suspension	SUSP																				
Expulsion	EXPLS																				
Opportunity Transfer	OPPTTR																				
Attendance	ATTNOC																				
Tuancy	TRNCY																				
Remedial Services	RMCL																				
Regional Center Referral	REGCTR																				
Student Study Team	SST																				
Special Education Assessment	SPCLD																				
Individual Education Plan	IEP																				
CA High School Exit Exam	CAPSEE																				
Holder of Education Rights	HEDRG																				
Participation in TDM	TDM																				
Other	OTHR																				